

REMARKS

Applicants hereby confirm the election of claims 1-28 with traverse.

In response to the Examiner's objections of claim 1, the claim has been amended so that the term "a" in line 9 has been replaced by the term --said-- and the term "a" in line 10 has been replaced by the term --said--.

In the subject Office Action, claims 1, 2 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,863,446 to Parker. In response, claim 1 has been amended to more specifically recite that the cap containing the patient and vacuum ports is removable. Applicants respectfully submit that this feature is not disclosed by the Parker '446 patent.

The Parker '446 patent does not illustrate a removable cap featuring a patient port and a vacuum port. Indeed, the Parker '446 patent does not disclose a cap at all for its reservoir 81, which receives fluids from patients. Even if the reservoir 81 of the Parker '446 patent did feature a removable cap, the cap would not include patient and vacuum ports as recited by amended claim 1. Instead, the Parker '446 patent places the vacuum port on the back panel of the cart as illustrated at 7 in Fig. 1. The suction ports, illustrated at 31 in Fig. 2, are positioned on the front panel of the cart. As a result, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1, and thus claims 2 and 9 which are dependent thereon, are patentable over the Parker '446 patent.

In addition, dependent claims 41 and 42 have been added by the present Amendment. Claim 41 depends from claim 1 while claim 42 depends from claim 41. Claim 41 recites that the cart of claim 1 includes a connector mounted on the body of the cart and in communication with the liquid level detector and adapted to communicate with a draining station. Claim 42 recites

that the connector is an electrical connector that communicates with the liquid level detector via an electrical line.

Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of claims 41 and 42 is not disclosed in the Parker '446 patent. With regard to claim 41, the liquid level meter 21 of the Parker '446 patent does not require a connector as it is never connected to the draining station or treatment unit 5. As a result, not only does the Parker '446 patent fail to disclose a connector that communicates with the level meter 21, it provides no motivation to add one. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that dependent claim 41, and claim 42 which is dependent thereon, are further distinguishable from the Parker '446 patent. Claim 42 is even further distinguishable in that the Parker '446 patent does not disclose an electrical connector and line in communication with the level meter 21.

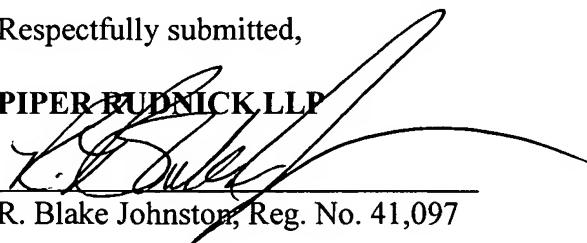
Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 16-28 are allowed and that claims 3-8 and 10-15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectively requested.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of the case, it is requested that the undersigned attorney be telephoned for that purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

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